



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
BOARD OF NURSING

IN THE MATTER OF THE LICENSE OF	:	Administrative Action
	:	
	:	FINAL ORDER
	:	OF DISCIPLINE
PAULETTE HALL, LPN	:	
License # 26NP06428500	:	
	:	
	:	
TO PRACTICE NURSING IN THE	:	
STATE OF NEW JERSEY	:	

This matter was opened to the New Jersey State Board of Nursing ("Board") upon receipt of information which the Board has reviewed and upon which the following findings of fact and conclusions of law are made:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Paulette Hall ("Respondent") is a Licensed Practical Nurse in the State of New Jersey and has been a licensee at all times relevant hereto.

2. On or about April 10, 2014, Respondent completed and submitted an online biennial renewal application. Respondent

was asked on the biennial renewal application whether Respondent would have "completed the required continuing education credits by May 31, 2014," referring to the biennial renewal period of June 1, 2012 to May 31, 2014. Respondent answered "Yes" and certified that answer by submitting the online application.

3. Upon receipt of information indicating that Respondent was arrested on January 6, 2015 by members of the Maplewood Township Police Department for violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:12-1A(1) (Simple Assault), the Board sent a letter of inquiry requesting certain information and documents regarding the criminal matter, Respondent's nursing practice, and continuing education to Respondent's address of record in Maplewood, New Jersey, via regular and certified mail on or about January 23, 2015. The regular mailing was not returned. The receipt of the certified mailing was signed upon delivery on January 23, 2015.

4. On January 29, 2015, Respondent's attorney sent a letter advising the Board that he expected the matter to be dismissed. The Board received no further response to the letter of inquiry.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Respondent's failure to fully respond to the Board's request for information constitutes a failure to cooperate with a Board investigation, in contravention of N.J.A.C. 13:45C-1.2 and 1.3, which the Board deems professional misconduct pursuant

to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(e) and also subjects Respondent to disciplinary action pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(h).

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3(b), nurses are required to complete a minimum of thirty (30) hours of continuing education during the preceding biennial period in order to renew their licenses. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3(f), nurses are required to maintain documentation of completion of continuing education for a period of four years after completion, and shall submit such documentation to the Board upon request.

By virtue of having failed to fully respond to the letter of inquiry, Respondent is deemed to have failed to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Board, that Respondent completed the continuing education credits required for renewal during the biennial period of June 1, 2012 to May 31, 2014. The Board therefore finds Respondent in violation of N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3(b) and 13:37-5.3(f), which in turn subjects Respondent to sanctions pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(e) and (h).

Respondent's use of dishonesty and misrepresentation during the license renewal process in falsifying her continuing education information constitutes a violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(b), subjecting Respondent to sanctions.

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions, a Provisional Order of Discipline was entered on October 7, 2015,

provisionally suspending respondent's nursing license, and imposing a reprimand and a total of \$750 in civil penalties. A copy of the Order was served upon the respondent. The Provisional Order was subject to finalization by the Board at 5:00 p.m. on the 30th day following entry unless respondent requested a modification or dismissal of the stated Findings of Fact or Conclusions of Law by submitting a written request for modification or dismissal setting forth in writing any and all reasons why said findings and conclusions should be modified or dismissed and submitting any and all documents or other written evidence supporting respondent's request for consideration and reasons therefor.

Respond replied to the Provisional Order, providing a disposition with regard to the arrest, and has documented timely completion of all required continuing education for the 2010-2012 and 2012-2014 licensing cycles. The Board noted that the assault charges had been dismissed in March of 2015, yet the disposition of this matter was not provided to the Board until after the Provisional Order of Discipline had been entered, in October of 2015. Moreover, although some of the documentation requested in the Board's letter of inquiry of January 23, 2015 had been sent to the Board, a copy of the complaint was not provided, nor was there a narrative statement from respondent.

Nevertheless, given the circumstances, the Board found that respondent had complied sufficiently with the Board's request for information, and that suspension of respondent's license was no longer warranted. Moreover, the findings as to misrepresentation on respondent's renewal application, and failure to timely complete respondent's continuing education obligation, were no longer warranted, so that there should be no imposition of the reprimand and \$250 civil penalty for the violation of N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3 upon finalization of the Provisional Order. However, in light of the delay in respondent's cooperation with the Board's request for documents and information, the Board determined that the \$500 civil penalty for failure to cooperate with the Board's investigation was entirely appropriate, as this failure to cooperate resulted in unnecessary delay and the waste of State resources involved in issuing an order to obtain requested information that ought to have been furnished months earlier.

ACCORDINGLY, IT IS on this 9th day of December, 2015,
ORDERED that:

1. Respondent is assessed a civil penalty in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500) for failure to cooperate with a Board investigation. Payment shall be made by certified check, bank cashier check, or money order payable to "State of New

Jersey," or by wire transfer, direct deposit, or credit card payment delivered or mailed to State Board of Nursing, Attention: Leslie Burgos, P.O. Box 45010, Newark, New Jersey 07101. Any other form of payment will be rejected and will be returned to the party making the payment. Payment shall be made no later than fifteen (15) days after the date of filing of this order. In the event Respondent fails to make a timely payment, a certificate of debt shall be filed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:1-24 and the Board may bring such other proceedings as authorized by law.

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF NURSING

By: *Patricia Murphy PhD APN*
Patricia Murphy, PhD, APN
Board President